

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant	:	Frank J. Hodges et al.
Appl. No.	:	Unknown
Filed	:	Herewith
For	:	TIRE WITH EXTENDED FLANGE SEAT
Examiner	:	Unknown
Group Art Unit	:	Unknown

REMARKS FILED WITH APPLICATION

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

Please consider the enclosed remarks in connection with the patent application submitted herewith.

Remarks/Arguments begin on page 2 of this paper.

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REMARKS

Applicants filed two different patent applications on October 7, 2002. These applications were U.S. Patent Application Nos. 10/266,040 and 10/266,050. Each of these applications had essentially the same disclosure. The claims of the '040 Application were directed to a wheel with an extended outer flange, and the claims of the '050 Application were directed to a tire with an extended flange seat. In a letter dated November 19, 2003, Applicants abandoned the '050 Application in view of financial considerations. However, the '040 Application is still pending. This new application claims priority to the '040 Application, and has claims directed to a tire with an extended flange seat.

The IDS included with this new application includes an Office Action from the prosecution of the '050 Application. The Office Action cited three references: Yoshida, Janus, and Barnes. The claims submitted herewith are patentable over the prior art, including those cited references.

U.S. Patent 4,365,659 to Yoshida et al. discloses a pneumatic safety tire. The Examiner in the '050 Office Action included with the Office Action a copy of Fig. 1 of the Yoshida reference with the Examiner's annotations designating various features of the Yoshida tire. Applicants have included a copy of that figure with the IDS.

Yoshida discloses a safety tire adapted to be installed on a conventional wheel rim. Each of the beads (1, 1) disclosed by Yoshida are configured to seat against a prior art rim in the usual way. Yoshida does not disclose an extended flange on either wheel rim, nor does Yoshida disclose extended flange seats on either of the tire walls. The feature labeled D by the '050 Examiner is a conventional bead and the feature labeled E by the '050 Examiner is a conventional rim flange or bead seat. Furthermore, Yoshida does not disclose a flange seat having a width greater than the width of the bead. Indeed, if the feature labeled F were construed as a ledge and the feature labeled D were construed as a flange seat, then the bead and the flange seat would be definitionally identical, having exactly the same width.

Thus, the Yoshida tire is not configured to interface with an extended outer flange, and it certainly does not simulate the appearance of a low-profile tire on a large diameter wheel. For these and other reasons, Applicant respectfully asserts that Yoshida neither discloses nor suggests the claimed inventions.

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U.S. Patent 5,620,235 to Janus discloses a vehicle wheel with an outboard flange that is smaller than the inboard flange: "[T]he flange 6 present on the outside of the rim is shorter in its radial extent than the flange 7 present on the inside of the rim." (See U.S. Patent 5,620,235, column 5, lines 40–42). Moreover, the inboard and outboard tire walls of Janus have different lengths. For this and other reasons, Applicant respectfully asserts that Janus neither discloses nor suggests the claimed inventions.

U.S. Patent 2,621,979 to Barnes discloses a flexible "trim member" for automobile wheel assemblies. Barnes explains that the trim member "is fabricated of any suitable synthetic or natural rubber material, and comprises an annular body which is arcuately shaped to conform to the outside wall 18 of the tire casing 17." Thus, the trim member is a rubber or rubber-like accessory on the outside of the tire wall. Barnes does not disclose either an extended flange on the wheel any type of "seat" for such a flange. In fact, the tire disclosed in Barnes is a conventional tire, with no adaptations whatsoever to conform to the trim member. For these and other reasons, Applicant respectfully asserts that Barnes neither discloses nor suggests the claimed inventions.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: 4/22/04

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